
Saint Paul Regional Water Services

Outdoor Watering Restrictions

Frequently Asked Questions

Last Updated: August 16, 2021

- **When am I allowed to water my lawn?**
 - Starting Tuesday, Aug. 17, SPRWS customers are required to observe odd/even watering schedules and watering time restrictions.
 - **Odd/Even Watering**
 - SPRWS customers with odd-numbered addresses are required to limit outdoor watering to odd-numbered days of the month.
 - SPRWS customers with even-numbered addresses are required to limit outdoor watering to even-numbered days of the month.
 - **Watering Time Restrictions:**
 - SPRWS customers are required to limit outdoor watering to the cooler times of the day - before noon or after 6 p.m. - to minimize evaporation.
- **Are there any exceptions to these restrictions?**
 - Commercial uses of outdoor water, including nurseries or community gardens.
 - Customers should attempt to water vegetable gardens, bushes, and flowers in accordance with the watering schedules. If necessary, they may water on additional days with a hand-held hose.
 - Trees may be watered any day with a dripping hose, bucket, or tree watering bag as needed.
 - Watering of new sod or seed if daily watering is required. It is recommended that any planting of new sod or seeds be delayed until the fall or until drought conditions subside.
 - Other exceptions for uses that promote public safety and public health may be granted by SPRWS. Exception requests must be submitted to the SPRWS customer service team through email: waterinquiries@ci.stpaul.mn.us or by phone: 651-266-6350.
- **Is this restriction specifically on sprinklers? Am I allowed to water my gardens with a hose nozzle?**
 - Customers should attempt to water vegetable gardens, bushes, and flowers in accordance with the watering schedule. If necessary, they may water on additional days with a hand-held hose.
- **What if I have a new tree, garden with vegetables, or flower garden in my yard?**
 - Customers should attempt to water vegetable gardens, bushes, and flowers in accordance with the watering schedule. If necessary, they may water on additional days with a hand-held hose.
 - Trees may be watered any day with a dripping hose, bucket, or tree watering bag as needed.
- **Can I wash my house, vehicles, or rinse my lawnmower?**
 - These types of activities are restricted to the odd/even schedule.

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- **Can my kids play with the sprinklers, slip and slide, or can we fill pools?**
 - SPRWS will not be enforcing restrictions on activities such as these, which are related to public health and safety. Please make sure to only run water when being played in to avoid unnecessary use.
 - **What if I don't abide by these restrictions?**
 - Enforcement will begin 72 hours after these required restrictions were put into place to allow time for notification and awareness to spread.
 - Restrictions Announced: 8 a.m. on Tuesday, Aug. 17
 - Enforcement Begins: 8 a.m. on Friday, Aug. 20
 - Response to Violations:
 1. First violation – Educational Notice
 2. Second violation – Written Warning
 3. Third violation – \$50 Fine
 4. Fourth violation – \$100 Fine
 5. Fifth and all additional violations - \$150. Fine + water shut off
 - All outstanding violation fees will need to be paid before water can be turned back on. Water shut off/on also results in a \$50 fee.
 - We hope that violations will be from lack of awareness. The first two violations will result in educational opportunities rather than fines. As all customers become aware and do their part to conserve water, we hope we will see an overall decrease in demand. If drought conditions continue and these restrictions do not decrease demand enough, additional measures may be needed as soon as next week (Aug. 24).
 - **How will I be informed that I have received a violation?**
 - An employee from SPRWS will attempt to talk directly with customers to discuss their first violation and ensure that the customer fully understands the restrictions in place to help avoid additional issues. A letter will also be issued to the property detailing the violation and providing information on the drought and restrictions.
 - Additional violations will result in a notice being left at the property. Fines associated with the third, fourth, and fifth violations will be applied directly to the customer's account and will be a part of the next billing statement.
 - **My neighbor is not abiding by the odd/even schedule or time restrictions. What should I do? What is SPRWS going to do?**
 - If you are comfortable doing so, feel free to share the information with your neighbor to make sure they are aware of the drought and requirement to follow watering schedules.
 - You are welcome to call SPRWS to report concerns. We will take down the address and will work to educate the customers on the current drought conditions and watering schedules.
 - **Will my neighbor get a fine if I call in to report their violation?**
 - SPRWS will work to verify violations and educate customers by sending employees out to properties that are potentially violating the watering schedules. We will not be issuing violations strictly based off reports from phone calls.

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- If an SPRWS employee witnesses a violation they will take a photo of the violation and may also take a water meter reading to verify additional usage.
 - **Will SPRWS be patrolling the service area to find and address violations?**
 - We will not have employees actively patrolling the service area at this point to look for violations. However, we have several SPRWS vehicles out and about in our service area each day for normal business. If employees witness violations or are informed of violations from phone calls, we will work to educate the customers on the current drought conditions and watering schedules. The response to the violations will follow the violation schedule detailed above.
 - **Do you know other ways I can conserve water?**
 - Water grass only when needed. Most lawns only need an inch of water a week.
 - Adjust lawn mower to height of 2.5 - 4 inches. Taller grass shades roots and holds moisture better.
 - Leave lawn clippings on your grass, this cools the ground and holds in moisture.
 - Take shorter showers using low-flow showerheads instead of baths.
 - Turn the faucet off while you shave or brush your teeth.
 - Fill the sink to wash dishes by hand instead of letting the water run.
 - Run dishwashers and washing machines only when fully loaded.
 - Visit our website for more tips.
 - www.stpaul.gov/departments/saint-paul-regional-water-services/water-conservation